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LECTURE,
INTRODUCTORY
TO THE
COURSE OF INSTRUCTION
IN THE
MEDICAL INSTITUTION
OF
YALE COLLEGE,
DELIVERED
NOV. 2, 1838,
BY JONATHAN KNIGHT, M. D.
PROFESSOR OF THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF SURGERY.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CLASS.

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LECTURE, &c.

GENTLEMEN :

It is now twenty five years since I addressed the first medical class that assembled in this place. For that period I have been enabled, by the blessing of Providence, to meet the young gentlemen who have resorted here to pursue their medical studies, almost without interruption, and to give them such information as was in my power, upon the important subjects of anatomy and physiology. The occupation which has engaged my thoughts and my exertions for more than a quarter of a century is now gone, leaving behind a thousand pleasant reminiscences of instructions received with indulgence, and of labors more than repaid by the kindness with which they were appreciated. A new department has been assigned to me, and in entering upon its duties, especially recollecting the zeal, industry and ability of the eminent men who have preceded me in it, I feel it necessary to solicit a large forbearance towards such errors and deficiencies as may be apparent in the instruction which I propose to present to you. All I can promise is my best exertions to advance you in the knowledge of the profession which you have chosen as the business of your lives.

I propose to introduce this course of instruction with some account of the physicians of this place, and especially of those who have been connected with this Institution, believing that such an account, by gratifying rational curiosity, and by placing before you the example of men eminent in their profession, will be at once interesting and useful.

The materials for the early history of medicine and of medical men in this place are too scanty to afford much satisfaction to the inquirer. All that I can find are occasional notices of these subjects in the records of the town, and in the letters of some of the first inhabitants.*

* The documents from which these facts are derived, were furnished me by the Rev. Leonard Bacon.

The first allusion which I find made to medical men, is in the year 1650, twelve years after the settlement of the town. Under the date of June 17, 1650, it is recorded that at a General Court or town meeting, the Governor informed the Court that notice had been given him "of a surgeon or physician, that was lately passed through the town towards the Dutch, that he heard had lived some time in Plymouth patent, and hath been of good use there." "And seeing that Mr. Pell (who from the way in which he is mentioned was probably a physician,) is now going away, whether it may not be good for this town to use some means that he may be staid here." "The Court liked well of what was done, and by vote declared that they desire he should stay here." This man, whose name was Besthup, complied with the invitation; and a few days afterward, June 25, an Indian having had his arm broken in an affray with a sailor, "the Court desired Mr. Besthup to do the best he could and heal it, and promised him satisfaction." How long Mr. Besthup remained here is uncertain. No further mention is made of him in the records. At the same time, a Mr. Augur is mentioned as a physician. In the case of the Indian just stated, "Mr. Besthup and Mr. Augur, two surgeons, being desired to give their advice," &c. In November, 1650, a claim was allowed by the Court against the estate of Adam Beese, a Dutchman, to Mr. Augur, of £3 1s. 6*d.* for physic which Adam had in his sickness: and February 4th of the same year, it is ordered, "that Mr. Augur should be paid his claim of 44*s.* 10*d.* for physic to Mr. Malbon's servants, and for something to a man that was bitten by a rattlesnake."

This Mr. Augur, I suppose, was the ancestor of several of the most respectable physicians now living in the city.

At this time midwifery seems to have been in the hands of females; for by a vote of the town, March 10, 1650--51, it is ordered, "that the treasurer pay out of the town stock for the mending of five or six rods of fence for widow Beecher the midwife;" and Aug. 4, 1651, it is ordered, "that the treasurer take care and see that widow Potter the midwife's house be mended, and paid for out of the treasury."

The inhabitants seem not to have been satisfied with the physicians already among them; for on the 14th November, 1651,

upon the representation of the Governor that there is a French physician come to the town, who was well recommended, and who would be willing to stay, if he may have encouragement, the General Court “desired their former committee to speak with him and desire him to settle among us; and that he may have a house provided, and encouraged in provisions, and what also is necessary, to the value of ten pounds.” On the 19th of November, 1651, this committee report, “that they find his wants so great, that £10 will go but a little way in providing for him: whereupon, the town, considering that he may be of good use in the place, and particularly in respect to Mrs. Davenport’s case, desired the committee to see that he be provided with a house and household stuff, and provisions for food and clothing, and let it be paid out of the town treasury.” This physician, who is mentioned as Dr. Chays, and to whom the title of Doctor is first given, appears to have had as many wants after as before his settlement. On the 9th of February following, “the magistrates and elders were desired to speak with the Doctor, and see if they cannot settle a more moderate price for his visiting of sick folks than he hath yet taken.” The difficulty in regard to his fees, probably led him in December, 1652, to ask permission of the town to leave it, although the year for which he was engaged was not out. The record says, “Much debate there was about it, but at last the town understanding that he intends to take nothing of Mr. Davenport for what he hath done for them, it was voted that after this day he shall have liberty to go as he sees he hath opportunity.”

After this permission from the town, the Doctor’s desire to leave seems to have lessened, and was probably a feint on his part to secure a compensation; for on the 22d of March following he applies to the town for a salary; “to which the court returned answer, that they will allow no salary;” “but if he please to go on in his practice, they shall be willing to employ him as they see cause.” Nothing more is said of the French doctor.

In 1654, Mr. Augur and John Brockett were appointed surgeons of a body of troops raised for a war against the Dutch.

About this time, 1654, efforts were made to induce Mr. John Winthrop, then living at Pequod, New London, who was afterwards for many years Governor of Connecticut, to settle here,

especially in reference to his medical skill. An offer was made to him of Mr. Malbon's house, of the value of £100, as a gift. Mr. Winthrop probably removed here in the autumn of 1655. In a letter from Mr. Davenport to him in November, 1655, he states that Mrs. Davenport "took care of some apples, that they may be kept safe from the frost, that Mrs. Winthrop might have the benefit of them," and that she "hath provided for Mrs. Winthrop a cleanly, thrifty maid servant."

In the spring following, upon his contemplating a removal to Hartford, which he soon accomplished, the town solicited him strongly to remain, and renewed the offer to him of the house in which he lived as a gift. "But" as the townsmen report, "he is not willing to engage, nor to accept of the house. But if the town be free, he is willing to buy it of them, and so be at the same liberty as other planters are, and will pay them for it in goats, half this year and half next year. The youngest he said should not be less than a year old, and the oldest not above two or three. The whole town voted that he should have it as is propounded." The departure of Mr. Winthrop was esteemed a great public loss. He is described by Dr. Trumbull, in his history of Connecticut, as "not only a great scholar, rich in experience and literature, but a most accomplished gentleman." He adds, that "he was one of the greatest chymists and physicians of his age, a member of the royal society of philosophical transactions, and one of the most distinguished characters in New England." Mr. Davenport, in his letters to him, often speaks of his prescriptions for himself and Mrs. Davenport, and of the benefit which many derived from medicines left by him with Mrs. D. to be dispensed to the sick as occasion might require.

In the winter of 1687-8, several town meetings were held to deliberate upon the encouragement which should be given to a Dr. Williams, then a resident at Hartford, as an inducement for him to remove to New Haven. He is mentioned as "an able or licensed physician, a man of very good report, and one that might be of good use in the place." The committee, to whom the business was referred, "reported that they would allow him £8 for his house rent for five years to come." After much debate the town voted, "that they did not see it in their way to grant any

yearly allowance or salary in the case, yet by a full vote (*nemine contradicente*) did declare that if Dr. Williams pleased to remove and come to New Haven, he shall be welcome, and well accepted in the place."

In December, 1692, he was chosen constable; "but upon notice being sent to him of it, he refused the choice, counting it an affront, and alledging that he knew neither law nor custom to justify the choosing him." The town were not satisfied with his reasons, and took measures to enforce the collection of the fine of 40s. of him, as of others in like cases.

After this time no mention is made of physicians in the records, and probably their employment was left to be regulated by themselves and their employers, without the interference of the general court.

Of the history of medicine, and of medical men, for a long period after this, I have gained too little information to make it a matter of interest. The names of many gentlemen who were reported to be, and who doubtless were, respectable practitioners, have come down to us; but so little is known to me concerning them, that I prefer to pass them over, and to come directly to the occurrences of our own times.

The Medical Institution of Yale College was instituted to supply the obvious want of medical instruction, which had long existed in Connecticut, and in the neighboring parts of New England. The only schools in New England, where public medical instruction was given, were at Boston, and at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. Few students from this State resorted to them. A larger number perhaps, though small in proportion to the whole who entered upon the profession, attended the well known lectures delivered at Philadelphia and New York. The greater portion of students contented themselves with the means of instruction which were afforded them by some neighboring physician. These means were for the most part inconsiderable. In this state of things it was believed that the establishment of an institution, where a regular and systematic course of instruction should be given, at such a place as would be easily accessible, and upon such terms as could be readily complied with, would prove

highly serviceable to sound medical science, and thus advance the welfare of the community.

The first effort to introduce medical instruction into Yale College, was made by the late Rev. Nathan Strong, D. D., of Hartford. About the year 1801, the corporation, upon his motion, passed a resolution to establish a medical professorship. No further action, however, was had upon it at that time.

In the year 1810, the Legislature of the State, upon the joint application of the corporation of the College and of the President and Fellows of the Connecticut Medical Society, passed an act to establish the Medical Institution of Yale College. Under this law, the Institution went into operation, and the first course of lectures was delivered in the winter of 1813-14.

The principal projectors of this enterprise were Dr. Eneas Munson, President Dwight, Professor Silliman, and Dr. Eli Ives. They were aided by their medical friends in various parts of the State, and the project received the official sanction of the State Medical Society, and the hearty coöperation and support of a great portion of its members.

In the year 1814, by the personal exertions of Dr. Nathan Smith, funds to the amount of \$20,000 were obtained by a grant from the Legislature of the State. With these, the building which we now occupy was purchased: a library was begun, which, by purchase and donations, amounts to about one thousand volumes, and the foundation of an anatomical museum was laid, which, by a gradual increase, now contains nearly all the preparations of the body which can be useful in the study of anatomy, together with specimens of a great variety of diseases.

The Institution was organized by the following appointments: Eneas Munson, Professor of Materia Medica and Botany; Nathan Smith, Professor of Medicine and Surgery; Benjamin Silliman, Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy; Eli Ives, Adjunct Professor of Materia Medica and Botany; and Jonathan Knight, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology. On the decease of Dr. Smith, in 1829, Dr. Ives was transferred to the Professorship of the Theory and Practice of Medicine; Dr. Thomas Hubbard was appointed Professor of Surgery, and Dr. William Tully, Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics. In the year 1831, Dr. Tim-

othy P. Beers was appointed Professor of Obstetrics. During the past year, the Institution has sustained the loss of Dr. Hubbard, and the department which he filled has been placed in the hands of him who now addresses you, and Dr. Charles Hooker has been appointed to the chair of Anatomy and Physiology.

The first class that assembled consisted of about forty members. From this time until 1827, the number gradually increased, when it amounted to over ninety. Since that time, the classes have been smaller; principally, as it is believed, on account of the establishment of several medical schools in those parts of the country from which students formerly resorted to this place. The whole number of those who have received their medical education here, in whole or in part, is between one thousand and twelve hundred.

About four hundred young gentlemen have been examined for, and have received the degree of Doctor of Medicine, from the President and Fellows of Yale College, and nearly three hundred have been licensed to practice by the President of the Connecticut Medical Society.

In the opinion of those who are qualified to judge, and who have watched the progress of the Institution, it has accomplished the object for which it was established, in diffusing more widely a correct knowledge of sound medical principles, and in elevating the character of the medical profession.

It has been already mentioned that Dr. Eneas Munson was appointed Professor of Materia Medica and Botany at the first organization of the Institution. For this situation he was eminently qualified, by his acknowledged talents and learning, his long experience, and his well known excellence of character, both as a physician and a man. It was hoped that, although he was then far advanced in years, being about eighty years old, he would be able to perform, at least in part, the duties of the office. He found, however, that the labor of preparing formal lectures, though upon a subject with which he was familiar, would be too great at his time of life. He accordingly declined to engage actively in the affairs of the Institution.

Dr. ENEAS MUNSON was born at New Haven, on the 24th of June, 1734. His father, Benjamin Munson, was a respectable me-

chanic, and, for a portion of his life, was employed as a school-master. He is reported to have been a good mathematician, and a man of much original wit. Dr. Munson graduated at Yale College, in the year 1753, at the age of nineteen. Immediately on leaving college, he studied divinity, and in due time was licensed as a Congregational clergyman. He was never settled, but preached for some time as a candidate in several places, particularly in New Haven, North Haven, and Northampton. Finding himself, on account of his health, unable to continue in the profession which he had chosen, he commenced the study of medicine. His instructors were Dr. John Darly of East Hampton, Long Island, and Dr. Townsend, of Gardiner's Island. The advantages which were afforded him for gaining a knowledge of his profession were probably very limited; for, many years afterwards, he remarked that no one ought to enter upon the profession with so little knowledge of it as he had obtained, or as he could obtain, when he was a student. Having properly qualified himself, he entered upon the practice of his profession at Bedford, N. Y. where he remained about two years. He was then solicited to remove to this place. He complied with the request, and remained here, a practicing physician, for almost seventy years, until the close of his long and useful life, on the 16th of June, 1826. In early life he was threatened with pulmonary complaints, and he was often the subject of severe indisposition; yet, by great care, by temperance and the judicious use of medicine, his life was prolonged to the great age of ninety two years. His death was produced by disease of the prostate gland. During his residence here, his life was unbroken by any great incident worthy of particular notice. He gradually advanced in the knowledge of his profession, in the extent of his practice, in the confidence, respect and esteem of his fellow citizens, and, as it is fully believed, by a life of virtue and piety, in preparation for his last and great change.

Some points of his character are well worthy of notice. He was ardently devoted to medical literature and science, and his desire of information upon its various branches continued unabated through life. Even during his last years, when he had given up practice, he read with avidity and delight such recently pub-

lished medical works as came within his reach. By diligent study, he became acquainted with the opinions and principles of the best medical authors, and by his judgment and good sense, he made a correct practical application of them. He paid more attention to the auxiliary branches of chemistry, mineralogy, and medical botany, than most physicians of his day. He was especially familiar with chemistry, as taught by Boerhaave and his predecessors, and was in the habit of preparing many of his own medicines. His enthusiasm in this science led him, it is said, to make experiments in regard to the transmutation of metals; whether as a mere matter of curiosity, or with any hopes of success, I am not informed. This notion appears at the present day too absurd to have ever been believed. It should, however, be recollected, that sixty or seventy years ago, very little more was known of the metals and their combinations, than that great changes could be wrought upon them by apparently slight and almost unexplained processes. When it was seen, that quicksilver could be converted into calomel, an almost impalpable, and to the senses an inert powder, or into corrosive sublimate, both so different from the metal and from each other, it was no strong mark of credulity to believe, that by some hitherto unknown process, it might be changed into silver or gold. At any rate, it was so far the current belief of the day, that the crucible, the stirring rod, and the powder of projection, might be seen warily and perhaps stealthily employed by many who had fair claims to science and good sense.

His knowledge of chemistry and mineralogy occasioned many applications to him to determine the value of the ores of metals, and other minerals. Upon these subjects he was the oracle of all this portion of the country; and if, like the oracles of old, the response was sometimes ambiguous, it was usually so delivered as to lead to a useful result.

He was probably not a scientific botanist; for, as the science of botany now is, books upon it could not be readily obtained in this country during the early part of his life. Indeed, the most important of such works, those of Linnæus and his successors, were not then written; yet he was well acquainted with the writings of the older botanists, and had paid much attention to the

indigenous plants of the country, especially such as were employed as medicines.

In addition to the more common modes of acquiring information, he corresponded extensively with learned men in this country and in Europe. From Baron Stork, of Vienna, who was one of his correspondents, he learned something of the virtues of several of the narcotic plants, and among them, of the *Conium maculatum*. Desirous of making trial of it in his practice, and not being able to obtain it in this country, he procured from Stork the seeds of the plant, which he cultivated, and thus introduced into this part of the country, and to the notice of physicians, a highly valuable medicine. He was also the means of making more fully known the medical properties of the *Cornus circinata*, of the avens root, (*Geum rivale*,) and if I have been rightly informed, of several other articles of value.

The means of information which he enjoyed, were used by an intellect well cultivated, vigorous and acute ; so that he became a learned, judicious, and successful physician ; and for many years was regarded as the patriarch of his profession. He was much resorted to by the younger members of the profession, who were received by him kindly, and were enriched from the treasures of his learning and experience. In his practice, Dr. Munson was assiduous in his attentions to the sick, patient in the investigation of disease, and careful in the use of remedies. He regarded medicines as engines of power, to be used prudently, actively if need be, yet always prudently, with a watchful eye upon their effects. My impression is, that he was peculiarly skillful in the treatment of chronic diseases. He was much consulted in such cases, and was resorted to by many persons from a distance, for the benefit of his advice. No physician of his day, in this part of the country, enjoyed a higher reputation for learning, matured judgment, and practical skill. He was one of the founders of the Connecticut Medical Society, and for several years was chosen President of that body. Besides his professional knowledge, Dr. Munson had many other qualities which endeared him to the community. The great purity and excellence of his moral character, his ready benevolence, his judicious counsels, and his pious advice to the sick and the dying, are still spoken of in terms of grateful remembrance.

He was rarely excelled in a flow of cheerful conversation, and in an abundant, ready, and ever-flowing wit, which was usually employed, and when so, most usefully and happily employed, in enlivening the social circle, in cheering the gloom of the chamber of sickness, in repressing the boastings of folly, and in reproofing the presumption of vice.

In his old age, his mental faculties were but little impaired, and he died as he had lived, in the enjoyment of the affection and respect of his fellow citizens, and in the cheerful hope of future blessedness.

It was thought highly desirable by those who were engaged in the establishment of this Institution, that some gentleman of established reputation and known experience should be placed in the chair of surgery. There was no one in this place or neighborhood who was sufficiently prominent, in these respects, to occupy that situation. Application was made to Dr. Cogswell of Hartford, who had been long known as one of the most accomplished and skillful surgeons in New England, to lend his assistance in this department. After much hesitation on account of the difficulty which would attend the delivery of a course of lectures here, while residing in Hartford, and his unwillingness to leave permanently a situation so desirable as that which he occupied there, he consented to make such arrangements as would afford the Institution the benefit of his learning and experience. When, however, it was soon after ascertained that Dr. Nathan Smith, then professor of physic and surgery in Dartmouth College, would consent to remove here if invited, he willingly relinquished to him a situation which he had reluctantly consented to occupy; so that, although regularly appointed a professor in the Institution, he did not join it in that capacity.

MASON FITCH COGSWELL was born in Canterbury, in this state, in the year 1761. His father, the Rev. James Cogswell, a native of Say-Brook, was the clergyman of Canterbury for many years. From this place he removed to Scotland, a parish of Windham, where he resided until, as we are informed by the Rev. Dr. Strong, in a sermon preached at his funeral, "being rendered incapable of public ministerial services, through the natural infirmities of age,

it became necessary, for his comfortable support, to remove him to the family of his son, Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell, of this place. This was a comfortable retreat to the venerable parent ; and here the Lord repaid to him in kind, his filial piety to his own parents in their old age : here he hath been nourished with the most tender affection, which may God reward, until January 2d, 1807." His mother, whose maiden name was Fitch, the daughter of Jabez Fitch, Esq. of Canterbury, belonged to a family from which have sprung many men of great eminence and worth. She died when he was quite young ; and in consequence of this event he was placed in the family of Governor Huntington of Norwich. Here he pursued his studies preparatory to joining college. He graduated at Yale College in the year 1780. As a proof of his talents and assiduity, it may be mentioned, that although the youngest member of a class which contained, as his competitors, such men as Matthew and Roger Griswold, Jonathan O. Moseley, and others of great respectability, yet he received the appointment of valedictory orator. After leaving college, he pursued his professional studies under the direction of his elder brother, Dr. James Cogswell, who after the close of the war of the revolution, and I believe before its commencement, was a respectable practitioner in the city of New York. At this period there were no public lectures on medicine, except in Philadelphia ; and these were much interrupted by the events of the war. Dr. James Cogswell was a surgeon in the American army ; and his brother was, for several years, with him as his assistant. Here he undoubtedly acquired that fondness for surgery, and that knowledge of its principles and practice which distinguished him through life. While in the army, he was stationed for a time in Stamford, where he formed friendships with the best portion of the inhabitants, which were permanent.

In the year 1789, he established himself permanently as a physician and surgeon in the city of Hartford. In this place there have always been physicians of deserved reputation and eminence. I know not, however, that he was immediately preceded by any distinguished surgeon. Whether it was so or not, he soon took a high rank in this branch of his profession. Although he had not those opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of anatomy which

most students enjoy at the present day, yet he is known to have pursued the study of anatomy by dissection ; and suffered, in consequence of it, a severe attack of Erythema anatomicum. In this way he obtained such an acquaintance with surgical anatomy, as enabled him to perform with skill every necessary operation ; so that I have never heard a want of anatomical knowledge attributed to him. For the performance of surgical operations, he was peculiarly fitted. In addition to what Cheselden mentions as having largely contributed to his own success, “a mind that was never ruffled or disconcerted, and a hand that never trembled during any operation,” Dr. Cogswell possessed, in a greater degree than any surgeon whom I have ever known, that happy dexterity in the use of instruments which gave him the power of operating with great accuracy, neatness, and rapidity. I have been told that he amputated the thigh in forty seconds. He first introduced, in the region where he practiced, the most important operations on the eye. In the performance of them, especially for cataract, he was peculiarly successful. The operation which he preferred was that of extraction.

He was the first person in this country, who secured the carotid artery by a ligature. The necessity for this arose during the removal of a schirrous tumor from the neck, which enveloped the artery. The ligature came off from the artery on the fourteenth day. The patient lived till the twentieth day, and then sunk in consequence of a slight hemorrhage from a small vessel near the angle of the jaw, acting upon a system enfeebled by a long standing disease. This was in November, 1803. A year or two before, the artery had been secured under similar circumstances on the continent of Europe, and by Mr. Abernethy in London. There is, however, no reason to believe that Dr. Cogswell was acquainted with these facts ; and he is fully entitled to the credit of having originated the operation. At the present day, when operations upon the arteries are so frequent, it is difficult to estimate rightly the boldness and judgment necessary to place a ligature upon so large and important an artery as the carotid. During his whole life he was engaged in performing the various surgical operations which would fall in the way of one who enjoyed the confidence of a widely extended circle of professional friends ; and it is well

known that patients resorted to him from great distances, to avail themselves of the benefit of his kindness and skill.

In one branch of his profession, obstetrics, he was nearly unrivalled. The delicacy and kindness of his attention to parturient patients, in a time of great anxiety and distress, both mental and bodily ; his abandonment of many customs formerly prevalent, by which the sensitive feelings of females were often wounded, as well as his great professional skill, gained him at once their confidence and esteem. It is questionable whether any person ever practiced this branch of medicine more skillfully and acceptably ; or more extensively, in proportion to the population of the place where he lived.

As a physician, Dr. Cogswell was extensively employed and much esteemed.

No man whom I have known, enjoyed more entirely the confidence, esteem, and respect of all with whom he was in any way associated, than the subject of this sketch. To account for this great uniformity of kind feeling towards him, we must look to something beyond his mere professional attainments.

He was, as all who knew him agree, a kind, benevolent, and noble spirited man. The fruits of these traits of his character were bestowed upon his patients in full measure. Assiduous in his attention to them, mindful of all their wants, full of compassion for their sufferings, especially of those who were both sick and destitute, and from whom he could hope for no reward ; he was the comforter of their distress in sickness, and the sympathizing sharer of their happiness, when health, with her spirit-stirring joyousness, revisited them. It was this obvious sympathy with their feelings, prompting all his efforts to do them every good in his power, which so uniformly made his patients his personal friends. He possessed also strong and kind social feelings. In the domestic circle, and in the society of his friends, he was polite, cheerful, and abounding in pleasant and instructive conversation. In amenity of manners, and in gentlemanly deportment he was rarely excelled.

He was an assiduous and successful cultivator of polite literature, especially of poetry. In these pursuits he was the companion and the compeer of Dr. Hopkins, Judge Trumbull, Rev. Dr. Strong, Mr. Richard Alsop, Mr. Theodore Dwight, and others of a kindred spirit.

In music he was a proficient. It is said that while residing in Stamford, he instructed the choir in that place, not only in the common psalm tunes, but also in an anthem or other piece of set music for every Sabbath in the year.

He was the active friend and supporter of every plan for the relief of the misfortunes and distress of his fellow men. It was a misfortune to him, but the means of great blessing to many others, that one of his daughters, in consequence of sickness in her early childhood, became a deaf mute. This led him to examine what modes had been adopted for the relief of those who were thus afflicted. Upon learning that a successful mode of instructing these unfortunate persons was in operation in France and England, he took measures to ascertain what the method was, and how the benefits of it might be brought within the reach of those similarly situated in this country. The result of his exertions, aided as he was by others of kindred feelings, was the establishment of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, one of the noblest institutions for the relief of the unfortunate which this country can boast. That this asylum owes its existence to the exertions of Dr. Cogswell, in the first instance, is as familiarly known as the institution itself. For his exertions in this cause, the benediction of thousands who cannot speak his praise will rest upon his memory.

He was also the active friend and supporter of the Retreat for the Insane, in Hartford, and of the Hospital in this city.

He was one of the original members of the Connecticut Medical Society, and was always interested in its proceedings; and was the friend of every measure by which the profession of medicine might be advanced in respectability and usefulness. The feeling which was entertained towards him by his professional brethren, may be gathered from the fact, that he was successively Secretary, Vice President, and, for ten years, President of the State Medical Society.

I may here remark, that few men have ever lived in habits of more free and friendly intercourse with the members of his own profession than he did, or enjoyed such intercourse more highly. And although he did not escape the censure of those with whose notions he could not agree, when during the prevalence of a se-

vere epidemic disease, the opinions of medical men were much divided, and feelings arose which threatened, and to a certain extent accomplished, the destruction of the harmony which ought to exist among them, yet here, the amenity of his manners, his gentlemanly deportment, and the uniform mildness of his conduct, disarmed even professional hostility of the weapons of its warfare.

As an instructor, Dr. Cogswell was much resorted to by young men who were pursuing the study of medicine. For this business he was well qualified. He was himself a scholar, and continued his habits of study during his life. It was his custom to spend several hours in the evening, after the labors of the day were over, and usually after his family had retired, in reading, principally, professional works. His library was one of the best in the State. By directing his students to the best authors, by studying with them such subjects as were not well known to him, such as chemistry and botany, by allowing them to witness his practice, and by exciting them to diligence, he probably rendered them a more lasting service than if he had devoted more time than he did to oral instruction.

He was also careful to instil into their minds correct principles of manners and morals : often warning them against such conduct as would be derogatory to the character of a gentleman and a christian. His wish evidently was to make them good physicians and good men.

It can hardly be necessary to remark, that sustaining all the relations of domestic life, and enjoying as he did, most fully, its pleasures, he was kind, judicious and affectionate in the performance of its duties. He married, in early life, the daughter of Col. Austin Ledyard, who was killed at the fort in Groton when it was captured by the British, as it is said, with his own sword, after it was surrendered into the hands of his captors. She is still living. His children, several of whom survive him, may well remember with gratitude his kind care, his judicious instruction, and his ready assistance : and if he was not careful to accumulate riches to bequeath to them, he left them what is far better, an honorable parentage, and the bright example of a life devoted to the best interests of his fellow men.

He died of pneumonia typhodes, in December, 1830, in the 70th year of his age.

The following remarks upon his moral and christian character, extracted from a sermon preached at his funeral by the Rev. Dr. Hawes, are most judicious and satisfactory. "His uniform assent to the great leading truths of the gospel: his esteem and affection for all the sincere disciples of Jesus Christ: his interest, especially of late years, in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom: his reverence of the holy Sabbath, and exemplary attendance in the house of God, worthy of the imitation of all engaged in the medical profession: his observance of the interesting duty of family devotion: his increasing regard for all that relates to the welfare of the soul, a circumstance that has attracted the notice of some of his most intimate friends; these traits of Christian character, in connection with the general tenor of his conversation and conduct, furnish a consoling hope that death was to him an unspeakable gain, and that he has gone to be forever with the Lord."

I have paid most cheerfully this slight tribute to the memory of one whom I loved and revered, and whose kind notice, afforded at a time when it could have been the offspring of his benevolent feelings alone, I regarded as an honor and happiness, and shall always hold in grateful remembrance.

DR. NATHAN SMITH was the first Professor of Physic and Surgery in this Institution, which office he filled from its commencement in 1813, to the period of his death in December, 1828. Having, upon a former occasion, considered at large the life and character of this eminent man, I trust I shall be excused for passing it over at present with brief notice.

He was born September 30, 1762, at Rehoboth, Massachusetts, and until he was twenty four years of age he was engaged in agricultural and other laborious employments. Having had his attention turned to the profession of medicine, by being the accidental witness of a surgical operation, he engaged in the study of it with Dr. Josiah Goodhue, of Putney, Vermont. After having practiced for two or three years at Cornish, New Hampshire, and thereby gained the necessary means, he attended a course of

medical lectures at Cambridge, Massachusetts. He subsequently visited Edinburgh and London, and availed himself there of the best means of completing his knowledge of his profession. Soon after entering upon the practice of medicine he established a medical school in connexion with Dartmouth College. For a time this was carried on by his sole labor; others were afterwards associated with him, and by their joint exertions, it became one of the most respectable and flourishing institutions in New England. Here he continued, engaged in a most extensive and laborious practice, as a physician and surgeon, until his removal to this place.

During the fifteen years of his residence here, his life was, as it had been before, one of great zeal and activity as a practitioner and instructor in physic and surgery. While by his commanding talents and acknowledged skill, he gained the confidence of all, his great affability of manners, and his ever ready benevolence, acquired their good will.

Dr. Smith was no ordinary man. Until past the period when most men are fixed in their occupation for life, he was, as he himself expressed it, a laborer with his own hands, in a comparatively obscure village, with a limited education, and still more limited means of extending it. After determining to become a physician, he devoted all his exertions and all the property he could acquire, to the attainment of a medical education such as was then almost unknown in New England.

The same enterprise and zeal as was manifested in obtaining his profession, followed him in the practice of it; and he labored most assiduously during his whole life, not only to perform acceptably and beneficially the duties of a physician, but to diffuse among medical men, by his private intercourse with them and by his public instructions, correct notions of their profession. In this he was eminently successful. It is not too great praise to say, that he accomplished as much for the improvement of physic and surgery in New England as any other man. The faculties of his mind, by the exercise of which he reached so high an eminence, were a discriminating inquisitiveness, watching with a keen eye every subject presented to him: a memory highly retentive, by which every thing of importance that he observed

was made a part of his mind : the power of reducing all his acquisitions, whether from reading or observation, to some useful practical purpose, and an undaunted moral courage, prompting him to do all that he believed the good of others required, regardless of its effects upon himself. He was also assiduous, kind and delicate in his attention to his patients, alike to all whether rich or poor, charitable to the destitute, bestowing upon them both his services and his property, cheerful and entertaining in his conversation with all, and of an unimpeachable moral character. With such qualities, both of the intellect and the heart, it is not to be wondered at, that he should be regarded with respect and admiration, and that his death, at the age of sixty seven years, when in the full maturity of his usefulness, should be felt to be a public calamity.

Upon the decease of Dr. Smith, the well known and long tried reputation of Dr. THOMAS HUBBARD, as a judicious and experienced surgeon, pointed him out as the proper person to fill the vacant professorship of Surgery. He was chosen to that office in 1829, and filled it to the time of his death, with great and increasing reputation to himself and benefit to the Institution.

In Dr. Hubbard we have another instance, added to the many which have preceded it, of a man raising himself to high and deserved eminence in a liberal profession, in the midst of an enlightened community, by great energy of character, unaided except by his own exertions.

He was born at Smithfield, near Providence, in Rhode Island, where his father resided as an inn-keeper, in the year 1776. While he was quite young, the family removed to Pomfret, in this State, where the same occupation was pursued. When he was about sixteen years of age, his father having died, the care of the establishment, and the oversight of the concerns of the family, consisting of a widowed mother and several children, all younger than himself, devolved upon him. The duties which were thus thrown upon him, at a period of life when most young men are scarcely competent to take care of themselves, were performed with great judgment and skill, and evinced the same energy and decision which characterized him through life. At this time

he acquired a fondness for agricultural pursuits, an employment which he continued with much gratification, until his removal to this place. What his early education was, I am not informed, though it is known that he pursued the study of the languages and of mathematics for a period, most probably a short one.

His professional instructor was Dr. Albigense Waldo, a surgeon of considerable reputation, who had acquired most of what he knew of the art by his practice in the army. Dr. Hubbard, however, derived the greater part of his knowledge from the diligent study of the best medical books, and from his own observation. He was a most diligent student, not only when preparing for his profession, but during his whole life. His library was a valuable one, especially in works on surgery, and his habit was to spend a portion of every day, even when engaged in a most laborious practice, in availing himself of the knowledge which it afforded. I have often heard him remark, that the physician who neglected his books would lose more by forgetfulness, than he would acquire by observation, and would be less skillful in his profession at fifty, than he was at thirty years of age. His written lectures bear the strongest marks of his great industry. He obviously revised with care every subject, each successive year, and at each revision added, in the form of notes and interlineations, the result of his reading and observation. This course of diligent study, aided by a strongly retentive memory, stored his mind with the most valuable information. I know not the man whose knowledge of the best practice of the best surgeons is more intimate and exact.

Having prepared himself for his profession, he commenced the practice of it upon the death of his preceptor, Dr. Waldo, in the year 1795, before he was twenty years of age. He met with opposition at first, on account of his attempting to unite the practice of physic with that of surgery. It seems to have been the custom of that part of the country, as it had been extensively elsewhere, for the surgeon to confine himself to that branch only, and to call in the aid of a physician when it was thought necessary. This plan Dr. Hubbard always reprobated, believing that the union of the two professions in the same person was better suited to the wants especially of a scattered population. What-

ever opposition there was, seems soon to have subsided. His practice became extensive and very laborious, reaching not only all the eastern parts of this State, but also the bordering towns of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. There is the fullest proof of the success of his practice, especially in surgery. His qualifications as a surgeon were of a high order. Though not early instructed in anatomy, he was in the constant habit of dissection, and thus gained the requisite anatomical knowledge. He was prompt and decisive in forming an opinion of the cases which were presented to him, and equally so in advising and performing such operations as he deemed necessary. His vigorous and well trained intellect, enlightened by long experience, grasped the strong points of a case, both as they were at the time, and as they would become if neglected. He always advocated an early resort to surgical operations, not timidly and hesitatingly waiting until its necessity might be more obvious, at the expense of the health and perhaps the life of the patient. In operating, he was cool, deliberate and collected.

The same promptness and energy which marked his character as a surgeon, controlled his practice as a physician. Employing but few remedies, and those of an active kind, he was thoroughly acquainted with their effects, and used them with great judgment and skill. He had great confidence in the remedial power of active medication. The object at which he aimed was to break up disease in its forming stage, or to control it by agents stronger than itself. This trust in the power of remedies he was in the habit of expressing strongly to his patients, and thereby secured that confidence on their part, which is so efficient an aid to the physician in the cure of diseases.

His energy and promptness sometimes gave a degree of peremptoriness to his manner, which, if untempered by kindness, might have been unpleasant. This was seen, however, to be prompted by the desire to enforce a strict observance of that course of treatment which he knew was for the benefit of the patient, and as such was duly appreciated.

In his intercourse with his patients, he was frank and undisguised, and entirely above those little tricks and concealments which indicate a weak or dishonorable mind. The same frank-

ness also marked his conduct towards his professional brethren, and all others with whom he associated. The free expression of opinions uprightly formed, he believed to be the right and the duty of an honest man; a right which he claimed for himself, and to the exercise of which by others he was unusually tolerant.

During the thirty four years which Dr. Hubbard spent in Pomfret, his time was fully employed in the faithful discharge of his professional duties, as well as those which devolved upon him as a good citizen, and a kind and upright man.

He was several times chosen a Representative, and once Senator in the Legislature of the State. He was also appointed President of the Connecticut Medical Society, and held the office until he declined a re-election. He was active in the promotion of such institutions as were designed for the benefit of the afflicted. The Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, the Retreat for the Insane, and the State Hospital, each in its turn received his efficient aid. In the last year of his life he was active, under the authority of the Legislature, in procuring information, and in devising plans preparatory to the establishment of a hospital for the insane poor. The fatigue and exposure, while on a journey connected with this object, appeared to excite the disease which terminated his life.

In the year 1829, Dr. Hubbard removed from Pomfret to this place, and assumed the duties of Professor of Surgery in this Institution, and for nine years he performed these duties with great zeal, industry, and success. As an instructor he was plain, simple, straight forward, abounding in correct principles and illustrative facts, without any attempt at the niceties of style or the graces of manner. Unbewildered himself by theoretical discussions, he spent no time in making theories of his own, or in marring those of others. His remark was, that if young men were desirous of theories, they could find enough of them in the books, and that his business was to teach them, by facts, how to distinguish and cure diseases. Possessing a memory wonderfully retentive, he embodied the accumulated facts, and the rich experience of his professional life in the course of his instructions, thus giving them authority and force. His lectures were highly useful, and deservedly acceptable.

His life while here was one of usefulness and honorable exertion. Assiduous and kind in his attendance on the sick, punctual to all his engagements, resigned under many afflictions, cheerful and instructive in his conversation, affectionate to his family and familiar friends, and just to all men, he gained the respect and confidence of the wise and the good. Dr. Hubbard was through life an upright and virtuous man. During the last years of his life, he thought much upon religious subjects, and his reflections, as we have reason to believe, under the Divine guidance, led him to embrace the truth and the faith of the gospel. This faith he professed by joining himself to the communion of the Episcopal Church in this city.

He died June 18, 1838, of a disease of the stomach and bowels, of which he had previously suffered several severe attacks.

And now, gentlemen, having, as minutely as was consistent with the time allotted me, given you a brief account of these eminent men, it may be useful to ascertain what were the elements of their prosperity ; and how it was that they became so strong in the affections, the respect, and the confidence of their fellow men. Differing from each other as they did in many points of their character, there may still be some traits belonging in common to them all, which may serve as an example and guide to your future life.

I remark in regard to them all, that they were entirely devoted to their profession. Other cares might press upon them as they do upon all men, other occupations might employ their hours of relaxation, but to their profession, to its study, and to the performance of its engrossing, active duties, all their best thoughts, and their strongest energies, were directed. So it must be with every one who aspires to their standard of excellence. The physician whose mind is drawn away from his profession by the allurements of pleasure, the engrossing desire of political distinction, or the greedy pursuit of wealth, cannot hope to excel in it ; and surely there is enough in the study of its various branches, and in the great and almost overwhelming responsibility of its duties, to task the brightest intellect, and in the rich rewards of private affection and of public respect and confidence, to gratify the best feelings of our nature.

They were all men of great industry in their profession : industrious, not only in the performance of its active duties, but by constant study and reflection, filling their minds with the stores of wisdom and experience. If these men could not rely upon the native powers of their mind, how can you or any others hope to succeed by pursuing such a course. Mere genius and skill, without industry, never made and never will make a physician ; and about as much reliance is to be placed upon them alone as upon having been born a seventh son, or having traveled among the Indians. They form a solid and firm foundation upon which a noble building may be erected : but for this, the materials must be collected with care, and arranged with diligence and skill. Many seem to believe that when they have gained the knowledge which is required of them as students, and are admitted to practice, their education is completed. Such should remember, that the requisite qualifications of students are such only as to give evidence that they may be safely allowed to begin their professional career, and not such as will be required of them before they can hope to receive the full confidence of the community.

Make your calculations, then, for a life of industrious exertion. Read much, and thus gather together the treasures which are scattered through the works of your predecessors : reflect much, and thus keep them well arranged and ready to be used for the relief of disease and wretchedness.

They were men of honest lives and great purity of moral character. Physicians are brought nearer than any others, to their fellow men, in their periods of weakness and sorrow and suffering, both of body and mind. It is right, that at such a time they should be guarded from all contamination by the near approach of deception, impurity and vice. It is peculiarly just, that the physician of loose principles and of corrupt practice, should be excluded from that unreserved, confidential intercourse, which must exist between the medical man and his patients. No such physician will deserve, or ordinarily obtain, the confidence of the community.

They were kind and benevolent men. Talents and industry may beget respect, but esteem and confiding affection are the

offspring of good will. How necessary these are to the successful practice of the physician, and how much they lighten his labor by proving its richest reward, can be appreciated only by those who have experienced their assistance and their consolation.

Permit me, in conclusion, gentlemen, to intreat you to imitate the example of these eminent members of our common profession in their devoted industry, their purity and their benevolence, with the full assurance, that by so doing, you will reap the reward which was bestowed upon them, the esteem, respect and confidence of their fellow men.

